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Genealogy & the Knowledge of Self

Genealogy



By Richard Lane,
Public Services

The search for self-knowledge is universal and timeless. It is, by many accounts, the basis for philosophical and practical consideration. Western philosophic ponderings of self-knowledge pre-date Thales of Miletus (c.624 BCE - c.546 BCE). Thales was asked, "What is the most difficult thing?" to which he replied, "To know thyself."

Confucius (551 BCE - 479 BCE) developed a practical philosophy emphasizing social order based in part on reverence for past generations. One authority tells

us that the social and moral philosophy of Confucius is the basis for social life in China even into the twenty-first century. The genealogy of Confucius has been

the relationship of one's knowledge of self to the external world. A philosopher may ask, "Can we have knowledge of self

in the long reach of history?"

Family historians do not require the underpinnings of philosophical thought to answer the question. The family historian will, with commonsense insight, give an easy answer. They will respond, "No, knowledge of self is more fully attained by connection to generations past. We know ourselves best when we understand the triumphs, joys, sorrows, sufferings, and even failings of those who came before us. We are their beneficiaries. We endure because they endured. We triumph as they triumphed. Our joys outweigh our sorrows as did theirs. Our failings are put behind us and we carry on."

"In all of us there is a hunger, marrow deep, to know our heritage - to know who we are and where we came from. Without this enriching knowledge, there is a hollow yearning. No matter what our attainments in life, there is still a vacuum, an emptiness, and the most disquieting loneliness."

- Alex Haley, Roots

recorded to more than 80 generations.

Western philosophers have debated among themselves for millennia about the nature of self-knowledge. They question

by careful introspection alone?" The discussion continues and a question is asked, "Can we fully know ourselves without knowledge of inherited culture and our place with-

The Positive Impact Social Media has on the Teenage Mind

When people think about teens and social media, they immediately begin to tally up the negatives. What good could possibly come from teens and tweens spending gobs of time on online networks, posting non-stop "selfies," some in rather suggestive poses, and often communicating with people they don't even know?



teen

Media today has a huge influence on teens. Television, computers, video games, social networking sites, has hugely impacts all aspects of a teen's life. Social media doesn't have to be a bad thing, if used right. Media can change lives for the better. It's hard to imagine that ten years ago there weren't any social media outlets. People had to use a phone or write a letter

in order to communicate with the world.

Social Media outlets are considered as bad for teens and their futures. Like for example, a social media post can determine the future of a teen before it even starts. Social Media is not always a bad thing. It can be a positive outlet for some teens.

There are many pages on social media outlets that can help boost self-esteem. Teens mostly look for a reassurance or acceptance in today's society.

Social media can be used as a supporter of teen issues; it is good to have a group of people the same age going through the same issues as the next person. It makes them feel like they are not alone and it encourage them to be proud of themselves no matter the circumstances.

Social media has become a great way for teens to keep up with current issues going on in the world without looking at a television. Rapidly social media is growing and technology is getting better with time and teens are expanding their minds to more possibilities with social media. Social media is not all bad; teens in today are using these outlets to make a difference and a profit.

Teens are allowing their voices to be heard through social media and becoming more accepted of the society we live in. At the end of the day, social media can be a good thing, but only in moderations.

- Ashley Newsome, Teen Coordinator

"I Reject Your Reality"

Myth Busted! If you have ever watched the show that exclaimed this for its fourteen seasons, you likely know that *MythBusters* has come to a close as of March and, if you are like me, miss it already. If you aren't familiar with this sometimes zany look at many of our testable beliefs, here is a crash course in a show that had more than its fair share of, usually, intentional crashes.

First aired in 2003, *MythBusters* began with two hosts and a focus around the proving or disproving of popular myths through scientific experimentation. Hosts Adam Savage and Jamie Hyneman brought the show to life, making engineering and do-it-yourself into hundreds of ways to test and explore the world. And have fun doing it.

The show focused largely on the process, driven by the almost robotic straight man Hyneman and excitable and divergent thinker Savage, the science was always the heart of the show.

Later additions would include more of the members of Hyneman's workshop, M5 Industries, most notably builder Tori Belleci, artist Kari Byron and electrical and robotics colleague. Whether determining if Pop Rocks and soda could rupture a stomach or seeing if a water heater could really become an unintended projectile, the team wanted to see how possible their myths could be.

Savage described their method as



"replicate the circumstances, then duplicate the results" which lead to many construction and modification projects.

While they would consult experts with relative frequency to gauge the plausibility of a myth and get an idea of how to approach it, they always would ground their conclusions in what they observed.

And if you want to observe a water heater giving a mock house a new skylight, that required a do-it-yourself (but don't-do-this-at-home) approach.

The sheer volume of myths Hyneman and Savage, and later the expanded team, tested would be impressive, but the way they went about it and their determination and the lengths to which they would go really set the show above and beyond. Every time a build failed, whenever the results may have been wrong, it was incorporated into the process and used to improve the next time.

So when their human sling shot fires the test dummy into the ground, it is right back to the drawing board!

This fusion of science and what was often considered limited to building a book shelf or installing a new fixture

came at almost the perfect time with a "maker movement" sweeping society, encouraging potentially impractical but still fun creations.

Hyneman commented that they had "stumbled on a way of doing the show that surfed the wave." And where the special effects and engineering experts surfed, more were encouraged to follow, guiding the better part of a generation to view science not just as rigid formula, but that technology especially was meant to be used, to be tested and that everything could be a chance to improve.

There are always more myths out there to bust, and the Science Channel is set to take them on with a new reality show, aimed at finding new hosts for a revival of what has been called "the greatest science show of a generation". Savage's words at the conclusion of the *MythBusters* finale sum up the experience quite neatly I think: "What has changed me as a person is what I've learned on this show."

Story by Peirs Anderson

CRS-8 Dragon Launch

On April 8, 2016, SpaceX launched the Falcon 9 rocket and Dragon spacecraft out into space.

The spacecraft's mission was to resupply the International Space Station. Dragon successfully completed its mission.

SpaceX had a secondary mission for its Falcon 9 rocket. SpaceX has been experimenting with getting the used-up rocket to land on a barge to save the Atlantic Ocean from rocket debris and to have a possible way of reusing rockets in the future.

SpaceX had been unsuccessful in the Falcon 9 mission until this particular

launch. The used-up rocket came barreling back down to Earth toward the unmanned barge.

As I was watching the live feed of the launch I had a feeling that the rocket was coming in at too much of an angle to safely land on the barge.

At the last second, the rocket emitted thrusters to right itself and land on the barge. The full launch can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1NPQR3R>, with the landing at the 27 minute mark. For a space enthusiast like me, I found the landing to be quite impressive.

To me, this is the start of cutting costs for public and commercial space travel. Is



space travel something you would like to experience?

Let us know on Facebook and Twitter.

- Drew Nevlud, Tech Coordinator



**Check out the exciting Children's
Programs at the Huntsville Public Library!**

- ☐ **Mother Goose Lapsits, 10:30 Mondays**
- ☐ **Storytime, 10:45 on Wednesdays AND Fridays**
- ☐ **Family Movie Night, 5:30, 2nd Friday of the Month**
- ☐ **Read with the Dogs, 3rd Monday of the month**

Complete listings of events at www.myhuntsvillelibrary.com

**For more information, contact Children's Coordinator Rachel
McPhail, at 936-291-5910.**

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These little coincidences perhaps convinced Chan that he "was always destined to become Singapore's greatest comics artist."

During his youth, after his education in a British school in Singapore Chan saw change after change as his country shifted control from one hand to another, fulfilling his passion for drawing comics all the while. From the May 13th incident involving student protestors and police to the Hock Lee Bus strike and its four fatalities, Singapore's Japanese and British occupation, all the way to the merger and later separation from Malaysia and the extreme censure of the press through 1986 and beyond. Chan illustrated and often satirized the events changing the small island state from a "sleepy fishing village into a modern metropolis in just a few decades!"

The life of this fictional artist proves the perfect frame for Sonny Liew to tell, not just the story of Singapore, but the story of many struggling creators, artists and authors alike. Liew's telling of Chan's life is littered with a variety of different forms of media from actual photos to sketches Chan made, usually around significant events and of course, many many comics. All of this and Liew's presentation and expertise therein creates a visually stunning and compelling look at Singapore and comics as a whole, from a weekly newspaper strip to full graphic novels and more. Not to mention giving Chan such realism and character, it is hard to believe that Chan is fictitious.

Just like Singapore which many believed too small to succeed on its own, Liew shows the challenges of a starting artist, even giving a glimpse of another world, where powers had aligned differently and Chan had achieved a different kind of success. And in the end, leaves us with the wisdom of an old man, still happily at work with his craft, intertwining history, comedy and something almost all of us likely enjoyed at one time or another — comics.

The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye and many other excellent new books can be found at your Huntsville Public Library and I look forward to my next new adventure off the shelf.

- Peirs Anderson, Circulation

It seems like there is a new piece of amazing technology coming out all the time! From smartphone apps that track people's steps to robotic vacuum cleaners and fridges that connect you to Twitter, there is a lot of new "things" hitting the market.

I think one of the more fascinating gadgets is the 3-D printer. It almost sounds too simple: use design software to make something, and voila, the printer makes you a three dimensional copy out of a hard plastic material. A company called Mattel recently released a \$300 3-D printer for kids. It is literally so easy that a child could do it!

The projects people make are endless: cellphone cases, earrings, toys, tools, shoes, machine parts, salt and pepper shakers, soap dishes, bird feeders...the list goes on and on. If you can think it, it's probably highly likely the machine can print it.

You don't even have to print with plastic either! Food companies have developed the software and technology to print with food although it's still in the early stages. Chocolate seems to be the most popular product to print with. Dutch industrial design student Chloé Rutzerveld developed the Edible Growth project in which she 3-D printed a mixture of healthy seeds, spores, and yeasts and was able to plant (and later eat!) the final product. Another company has developed a way to print fruit in any shape and size which means square bananas and triangle apples could become a thing. The implications of these projects are endless from feeding villages in third world countries to stocking airlines with better in-flight meals.

Another popular and unusual application for 3-D printing is in the medical field where it is often called bioprinting. A Cornell University researcher has bioprinted a heart valve to fix a weakened heart. Amputees have benefitted from bioprinted prosthetics or simply low-cost parts for them. Other researchers are looking for ways to print prescription drugs, making medicine more accessible and less costly for those who desperately need it. Currently, bioprinted livers are being used to test medications but the hope is that one day surgeons can use bioprinted organs in transplants.

It's an exciting time in the world of technology and I am looking forward to even more innovations with 3-D printing.

*- Rachel McPhail,
Children's Librarian*